

BRAIN DRAIN OF NEPALESE STUDENT

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ABSTRACT

Background - It is the movement of highly skilled and qualified people towards a country where they can work in better conditions and earn more money. It is also termed as “human capital flight” because it resembles the case of capital flight.

Objectives – The objective of the study is to analyze the causes and effects of brain drain of Nepalese students.

Methodology – Due to the specific nature of the research objectives, descriptive cum analytical research design has been used.

Findings – Brain drain is a serious problem in Nepal. It creates both a positive effect and a negative effect directly or indirectly in the economic development of the country.

Key words: Brain drain, Nepal

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Brain drain can be defined as the mass emigration of technically skilled people from one country to another country. In other words, it is the movement of highly skilled and qualified people towards a country where they can work in better conditions and earn more money. It is also termed as “human capital flight” because it resembles the case of capital flight. Nowadays brain drain is the burning issues of every household in developing countries. Brain drain can occur either when individuals who study abroad and complete their education do not return to their home country, or when individuals educated in their home country emigrate for higher wages or better opportunities (Faini, 2003).

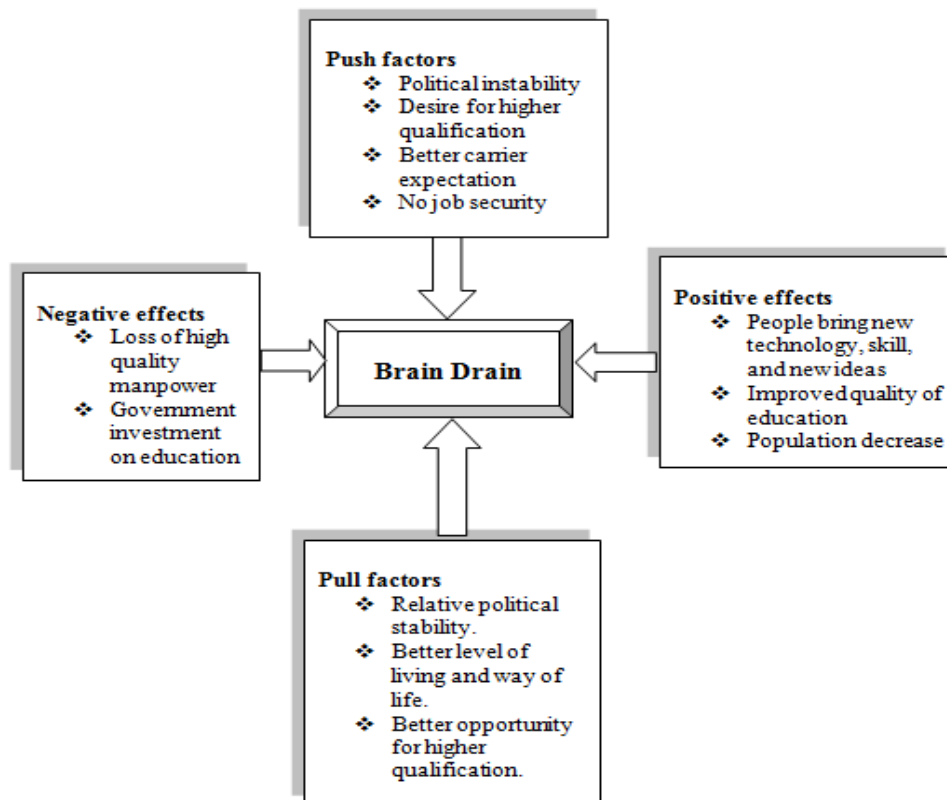
Brain drain is the migration of skilled human resources for employment, trade, education, etc. The majority of migration is from developing to developed countries. This is of growing concern worldwide because of its impact on the developing countries. This translates into a loss of considerable resources as well as the talent pool when these people migrate, with the direct benefit accruing to the recipient states who have not worked out the cost of educating them.

Nepal is a landlocked country surrounded by India on three sides; East, West and South, and China to its North. The geographical position has been making it a melting ground for people and cultures from both north and south of its borders. In the ancient times, Nepalese migrated from one place to another in search

of food and shelter. Likewise, they have been traveling to foreign countries for education throughout history. Nepalese people used to go to Kashi (India) to study. Now, Nepalese people go abroad expecting to get a better and higher quality education and employment. Every middle class family dreams about sending their children to foreign countries for further education. The recent flux of students to USA is evidence to this fact. Besides, many students go to India, China, Bangladesh, Singapore, Russia, Australia, Canada, Germany, U.K. and many other countries around the globe. However, the problem is not about students going abroad, rather, the crux of the problem is that most of the students who go abroad tend to settle in the foreign lands and work there. Many people complain that Nepal does not have appropriate facilities and sufficient opportunities for the utilization of their skills, they have learnt abroad. So, the skills they gain in foreign countries are used in those countries and not in Nepal (MOE, Scholarship Department).

2. FACTORS CAUSING THE BRAIN DRAIN OF STUDENTS

The 'Brain Drain of Nepalese Students' is a contentious subject and the very term has been challenged in recent years. To understand the scale and impact of students' migration from developing countries, it is necessary first to understand the factors driving it. These can be usefully categorized as 'push' and 'pull' factors (Economic Review, World Bank).



2.1. Push Factors of Students' Brain Drain Include

Political Instability

Nepal has faced various problems due to political instability which has ultimately had adverse effects on the students' future career. People tend to feel insecure about their careers pushing them towards foreign country. Therefore, political condition should be stable for the better future of the citizens and to decrease the brain drain of Nepalese students.

Desire for Higher Qualification

Everyone desires for better qualification, it is not possible in Nepal due to various reasons. Not many training and development programs are conducted resulting in low skilled manpower. Obstructions in gaining knowledge such as strikes and bandhs also degrade the quality of life. So, majority of students are willing to go abroad for education and not return back.

Better Career Expectations

In general, people are resistant to risks and major changes regarding their future. A better career is sought for a high quality life. Most youths and students believe that the quality of work life is low in Nepal and expect to get better jobs abroad. Therefore, a large number of students are approaching foreign employment and it has become one of the most important push factors for students' brain drain.

No Job Security

People seek for a secure life. The Nepalese students do not feel secure about their future jobs in the country. Therefore, there is a tendency to reach out for jobs abroad as security.

2.2. Pull Factors of Student's Brain Drain Include

Relative Political Stability

Expectation of political stability in developed foreign countries is a major factor which attracts the Nepalese students. They don't have to face daily strikes, protests and bandhs, along with other government problems. So, relative political stability is one of the major pull factors of brain drain of Nepalese students.

Better Level of Living and way of Life

Increased income and greater availability of facilities leads to increased standard of living of people and their way of life. Due to this reason, a large number of Nepalese students move abroad and settle there.

Better Opportunity for Higher Qualification

As foreign countries have qualified and highly recognized institutions which provide quality education, numerous Nepalese go to these countries. This also pulls the students of Nepal towards the foreign countries.

2.3. Positive Effect of Students' Brain Drain

People Bring New Technology, Skill, and New Ideas

The migration of students helps to bring in various new things and generate new ideas. It also helps in the development of new technology and promotes innovation. This helps to improve standard of living of the people and leads to the overall development of the country.

Improved Quality of Education

It helps to improve the quality of education as in foreign countries the technique of teaching is different and more recognized, globally. This aids to create qualified, skilled and knowledgeable manpower.

Population Decrease

The number of people attracted towards foreign countries is on the rise which can lead to a decrease in population and may have positive impacts i.e. by reducing overpopulation and crowd in the urban parts of the country.

2.4. Negative Effect of Students' Brain Drain

Loss of High Quality Manpower

When people get higher education they desire better jobs and opportunities found abroad, which is a great loss for Nepal. Skilled and knowledgeable manpower is required for the development of the country. But, their lack of interest leads to backwardness of the home country.

Government Investment on Education

Every year Government spends millions of rupees for education of students but it is useless because students prefer to study in foreign countries. The migration of youths and students is a loss for the country because they are the future.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:

- To study about the causes of brain drain of Nepalese students.
- To find out the impacts of brain drain of Nepalese students.

4. SIGIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The main significances of the study are

- It serves the students as a reference or guide in enhancing their knowledge.
- Students can gain an idea about brain drain.
- The study can definitely be an eye opener to all the concerned groups regarding brain drain.
- The present research will be important for the future researchers also giving them insights about brain drain.

5. METHODOLOGY USED

This study has followed both descriptive and analytical approach of research. Both primary and secondary information sources have been used for the fulfillment of the objectives of the study.

A questionnaire survey has been conducted for getting the answer of research questions. The questionnaire survey includes 11 questions. Questionnaires were distributed to 250 students of various colleges inside the Kathmandu Valley. In order to increase the reliability and number of responses, personal contact to each and every respondent was made to distribute and collect the questionnaire.

Secondary data have been collected from various websites and published reports.

5.1. Respondent's Profile

In this section, characteristics of respondents have been presented

5.1.1. Gender and Age Wise Respondents

Age of Respondents	Male No.	%	Female No.	%	Total No.	%
Below 20 Years	40	16	25	10	65	26
20 - 25 Years	60	24	50	20	110	44
26 - 30 Years	30	12	20	8	50	20
30 – 35 Years	20	8	5	2	25	10
Total	150	60	100	40	250	100

Majority of respondents were male i.e. 60% and female were 40%. Similarly, it is observed that highest number of respondents was found to be between 20 to 25 years group i.e. 44%. Very few respondents fall in the category of between 30 to 35 years group i.e. 10%. Male and female respondents in category 20 to 25 years group were highest i.e. 60 and 50 respectively.

5.1.2. Gender and Education Wise Respondents

Educations	Male No.	%	Female No.	%	Total No.	%
SLC	30	12	23	9.2	53	21.2
Plus 2	51	20.4	30	12	81	32.4
Bachelors	49	19.6	31	12.4	80	32
Masters	20	8	16	6.4	36	14.4
Total	150	60	100	40	250	100

Majority of respondents were found in Plus 2 and Bachelors Level i.e. 81 and 80 respectively out of 250. Very few respondents fall in the category of Masters Level i.e. 14.4%. Male and female respondents in the SLC Level were 30 and 23 out of 250 respectively.

6. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

6.1. Top Seven Countries Nepalese Students have been Studying

Countries	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Australia	3,317	3,644	4,408	11,184	13,218
Japan	1,275	1,310	4,272	7,933	8,133
USA	796	849	809	1,456	1,605
India	770	812	1,211	1,003	1,215
UK	512	577	627	438	570
China	411	453	340	581	600
Bangladesh	287	307	377	473	490

{Source: Ministry of Education, Scholarship Department, 2015/16}

From above table it can clearly be stated that Australia has been the main country where most students have gone for further study i.e. it has increased from 3,317 students to 13,218 students from 2011/12 to 2015/16, respectively. Second choice of Nepalese students has been Japan where number of students has increased from 1,275 to 8,133 i.e. more than five times from 2011/12 to 2015/16, respectively. Similarly, USA, India, UK, China and Bangladesh have been other important destinations for Nepalese students. Nepalese students are lured to other countries too because of opportunities for learning and earning. Currently, Nepalese students are studying in 45 countries across the world.

6.2. Number of Students Going Abroad and Receiving No Objection Certificate (NOC) in Different Years

Year	No. of Students Going Abroad	No. of Students Receiving NOC
2011/12	11,912	11,912
2012/13	16,504	16,499
2013/14	28,126	28,126
2014/15	30,696	29,380
2015/16	32,489	30,758

{Source: Ministry of Education, Scholarship Department, 2015/16}

Above table shows that, during the fiscal year 2015/16 the large number of students has received the NOC for abroad study i.e. 30,758. The lowest number of students receiving NOC was 11,912 during 2011/12. From 2012/13 to 2013/14 the number of students going abroad has been increased by 11,622 i.e. by 70%. But from 2013/14 to 2014/15 and 2014/15 to 2015/16 it has been increased by only 2,570 and 1,793 i.e. by 9% and 6% respectively. In these couple of years the number of Nepalese students studying abroad has decreased because studying abroad has become further expensive and strict immigration rules implemented by foreign countries.

6.3. Respondent's Plan to Study Abroad

Response	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Positive	164	65.6
Negative	86	34.4
Total	250	100

From above table it is cleared that out of the total respondents, 65.6 % of students have a plan to study abroad and 34.4 % of the students are staying in Nepal to continue their studies.

6.4. Respondent's in Favor of Brain Drain

Response	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Yes	94	37.6
No	156	62.4
Total	250	100

Above table showed that out of total respondent's 37.6% of students have in favor of brain drain and 62.4% of the students are not support of brain drain.

6.5. Factor Responsible for Growing Brain Drain

Factors	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Political Instability	86	34.4
War and Social Turmoil	8	3.2
For Career/Employment Opportunities	115	46
For Better Future/Livelihood	41	16.4
Total	250	100

Table clearly explained that 46% of the respondents (which is the highest percentage) have strongly agreed the statement that brain drain is increasing because of lack of career/employees opportunities. Similarly, 3.2% of students have desire to study in foreign county for social turmoil, 34.4% of students have assumed political instability as major cause of brain drain where as 16.4% of students agreed the statement that brain drain is due to no hopes of better future in Nepal.

6.6. Long Term Negative Consequences of Brain Drain

Consequences	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Economic Backwardness	67	26.8
Shortage of Skilled Work Force	110	44
Loss of Potential Future Entrepreneurs	58	23.2
Loss of Innovative Ideas	15	6
Total	250	100

Above table exhibited that 44% of students have agreed the statement that the long term negative consequences of brain drain is shortage of skilled work force whereas 26.8% is economic backwardness. Only 6% students have been agreed the statement that the long term negative consequences of brain drain is loss of innovative ideas.

6.7. Long Term Positive Consequences of Brain Drain

Consequences	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Attracting New Technologies, Skills and Ideas	90	36
Improvement in Quality of Education	160	64
Total	250	100

Above table explained that 64% of students have agreed the statement that the long term positive consequences of brain drain is improvement in quality education whereas another one is attracting new technologies, skills and ideas with 36% response.

6.8. Solutions for Brain Drain

Factors	No. of Students	Percentage (%)
Good Governance	49	19.6
Taxing Emigrants	31	12.4
Proper Education System	78	31.2
Career Opportunities	92	36.8
Total	250	100

Above table exhibited that 36.8% of the respondents have strongly agreed the statement that solution of brain drain is providing better career/employment opportunities. Similarly, 31.2% of students have suggested proper education system in the country and 19.6% preferred good governance system for better solutions of brain drain.

7. CONCLUSION

This research shows that in Nepal thousands of people leave the country every day for better future and better career which hampers and hinders the development of the country. Every middle class family in Nepal dreams to send their children abroad for further education. Every year youths are reported to leave the country for various reasons. They seek opportunities in its various manifestations i.e. higher living standards, employment, better income, and education, a luring western lifestyle, stability and security. It creates a positive effect but mostly negative effect directly or indirectly, making it necessary to understand the impact of brain drain. Currently, Nepalese students are studying in 45 countries around the world. Among them, Australia, Japan, USA, India, China, Bangladesh, Singapore, Russia, Canada, Germany, UK have been some of the important countries for Nepalese students for further studies.

The government policies should be focused on reducing brain drain of Nepalese students. Similarly, the country should initiate and generate opportunities and facilities which will create an environment for reverse brain drain.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

There is increasing trend of students going abroad for higher education. Students who are studying abroad are not willing to come back to Nepal. So here are some recommendations for the concerned groups:

- Youth should utilize the high quality skills and knowledge that have been obtained from the other countries for the development of their own countries.
- Brain drain should be avoided because a developing country like Nepal will bear major losses than gain from it.
- Government should have a comprehensive policy in place, promoting industrialization in the country, creating jobs and an education patterns that are career oriented.
- The country should then initiate and generate opportunities and better facilities which will create an environment for reverse brain drain.
- The government should seriously think about this brain drain.

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